BACKGROUNDER NO. 5-5795 MAY 5, 1978
CLAUDIO ESKENAZI

THIS WEEK NO. 18

ANNCR:

"THIS WEEK."

FROM THE VOICE OF AMERICA, THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK GONE BY...A LOOK AT SOME OF THE EVENTS, A CROSS-SECTION OF THE IDEAS, AND THE VOICES O SOME OF THE PFOPLE WHO MADE NEWS DURING THE PAST SEVEN DAYS. YOUR NARRATOR IS ----------.

NARR:

THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S PLAN TO SELL JET FIGHTERS TO EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA AND ISRAEL WAS BACK IN THE NEWS THIS WEEK, AS THE U.S. CONGRESS BEGAN DEBATING THAT PROPOSAL. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE CONGRESSIONAL OPPOSITION TO SELLING THE SOPHISTICATED JETS TO SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT, BUT THE ADMINISTRATION PRESSED ITS POINT.

SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE, TESTIFYING BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, ARGUED THAT EGYPT IS PLAYING A KEY ROLE IN THE SEARCH FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND IN THE PROMOTION OF MODERATE POLICIES IN GENERAL. HE ADDED THAT SAUDI ARABIA HAS CONSISTENTLY DEMONSTRATED ITS FRIFNDSHIP TOWARD THE UNITED STATES, AND THE SECRETARY STRESSED THAT SAUDI ARABIA PLAYS A VITAL ROLE BOTH IN PROMOTING MODERATE POLICIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND IN DECISIONS AFFECTING THE PRICE AND SUPPLY OF OIL.

MISTER VANCE ALSO SAID THE PROPOSED SALES WILL SUPPORT THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS BECAUSE THEY WILL HELP BRING THE FEELING OF SECURITY AND CONFIDENCE THAT IS NEEDED ON ALL SIDES. AND HE WARNED THAT FAILURE TO PROCEED WITH THE SALES WILL SERIOUSLY UNDERCUT THE AMERICAN MEDIATING ROLE AND RAISF DOUBTS ABOUT U.S. READINESS TO WORK WITH MODERATE GOVERNMENTS.

DEFENSE SECRETARY HAROLD BROWN PREDICTED THAT FAILURE TO APPROVE THE ARMS SALES WOULD PRODUCE THE FOLLOWING RESULTS:

TAPE: CUT ONE -- BROWN

"THE SAUDIS AND THE EGYPTIANS WOULD FEEL THEIR SECURITY VERY SUBSTANTIALLY THREATENED WITH REASON AND WOULD ACT ACCORDINGLY. AND THE ISRAELIS WOULD ALSO WITH SOME REASON FEEL THEIR SECURITY THREATENED."

NARR:

(OPT) EARLIER IN THE WEEK, SAUDI ARABIA'S OIL MINISTER SEHIKH ZAKI YAMANI MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT'S WILLINGNESS TO MAINTAIN A HIGH LEVEL OF OIL PRODUCTION AND SUPPORT FOR THE U.S. DOLLAR IS BASED ON ITS SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES. AND HE ADDED THAT THIS SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WOULD BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED IF CONGRESS BLOCKS THE PROPOSED JET FIGHTERS. HE ALSO SAID THE PROPOSED SALE HAS BECOME A SYMBOL OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. (END OPT)

THE CONGRESS THIS WEEK WAS ALSO BUSY WITH ANOTHER CONTROVERSIAL ADMINISTRATION PROPOSAL: LIFTING THE FOUR-YEAR-OLD EMBARGO AGAINST ARMS SALES TO TURKEY. AFTER A HEATED AND EMOTIONAL DEBATE, THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE VOTED BY A NARROW MARGIN TO GO ALONG WITH THE ADMINISTRATION'S REQUEST.

DURING THE DEBATE, SUPPORTERS OF THE MEASURE SAID THAT LIFTING THE EMBARGO AGAINST TURKEY WAS THE ONLY WAY TO GET PROGRESS TOWARDS A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE CYPRUS DISPUTE. TURKEY, THEY ARGUED, WOULD NOT NEGOTIATE UNDER THE PRESSURE OF THE EMBARGO, WHICH, THEY CLAIMED, HAD ALREADY CAUSED TOO MUCH DAMAGE TO U.S. TURKISH RELATIONS AND TO THE STRENGTH OF THE NATO ALLIANCE.

PROPONENTS OF THE CONTINUED EMBARGO ARGUED THAT TURKISH CONTROL OVER A LARGE PART OF CYPRUS CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED AND THAT THE EMBARGO WAS THE ONLY WAY TO FORCE A TURKISH PULLBACK FROM THE ISLAND. BECAUSE THE COMMITTEE VOTE WAS SO CLOSE, BOTH SIDES

PREDICTED A HARD FIGHT WHEN THE LEGISLATION COMES UP FOR A FINAL VOTE ON THE HOUSE FLOOR.

ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER MENACHEM BEGIN WAS IN WASHINGTON THIS WEEK FOR CELEBRATIONS MARKING ISRAEL'S THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY AS AN INDEPENDENT NATION. HE SAID ISRAEL HOPES THE PEACE PROCESS WILL CONTINUE AND THAT REAL PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST WILL BE ESTABLISHED.

AFTER MEETING WITH THE ISRAELI LEADER, PRESIDER CARTER UNDERSCORED THE CONTINUING AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AS WELL AS THE SPECIFIC COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL'S SECURITY:

TAPE: CUT TWO -- CARTER

"WE MAY FROM TIME TO TIME HAVE OUR TRANSIENT DIFFERENCES WITH THE LEADERS OF ISRAEL, AS WE DO WITH LEADERS OF OTHER COUNTRIES WHO ARE OUR CLOSE FRIENDS AND ALLIES. BUT WE WILL NEVER WAVER FROM OUR DEEP FRIENDSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP WITH ISRAEL AND OUR TOTAL, ABSOLUTE COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL'S SECURITY."

NARR:

PRIME MINISTER BEGIN ALSO PLEDGED HIS SUPPORT FOR A PERMANENT PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST:

TAPE: CUT THREE -- BEGIN

"MISTER PRESIDENT, WE SHALL GO ON WORKING FOR PEACE WITH ALL OUR HEARTS AND ALL OUR SOULS -- BECAUSE WE YEARN FOR IT AND WANT IT. AND LET US HOPE THAT THE ROAD FOR PEACE WILL BE REOPENED."

NARR:

LATER IN THE WEEK, STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SAID THERE HAS BEEN NO BREAKTHROUGH IN THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE NEGOTIATIONS, DESPITE OPTIMISTIC REPORTS COMING FROM THE BEGIN PRESS PARTY.

(OPT) PRESIDENT CARTER ALSO WELCOMED ANOTHER FOREIGN LEADER THIS WEEK: JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER TAKEO FUKUDA. AFTER MEETING AT THE WHITE HOUSE MISTER FUKUDA PROMISED THAT JAPAN WILL TAKE A NUMBER OF STEPS TO REDUCE ITS HUGE TRADE SURPLUS AND COOPERATE MORE FULLY WITH THE UNITED STATES ON ALL ECONOMIC MATTERS.

A WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN SAID MISTER FUKUDA REAFFIRMED JAPAN'S INTENTIONS TO EQUALIZE TRADE WITH THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER WESTERN NATIONS. SHORT TERM MEASURES INCLUDE JAPAN'S INCREASED PURCHASE OF NON-FERROUS METALS AND ITS STOCKPILING OF OIL SUPPLIES. OVER THE LONG TERM, THE JAPANESE LEADER PROMISED HIS COUNTRY WOULD TRY TO INCREASE ITS ECONOMIC GROWTH RATE TO STIMULATE A LAGGING WORLD ECONOMY. (END OPT)

THERE WERE NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA THIS WEEK. RHODESIA'S INTERIM GOVERNMENT CALLED ON ALL GUERRILLA FORCES TO LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS, RETURN HOME AND JOIN IN A PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO BLACK MAJORITY RULE. THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT GOVERNMENT ALSO LIFTED THE BAN ON THE TWO BLACK NATIONALIST GROUPS THAT HAVE BOYCOTTED THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT -- ZAPU AND ZANU.

ONE OF THE THREE BLACK LEADERS OF THE INTERIM RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT, REVEREND NDABANINGI SITHOLE -- HAILED THE NEW MEASURES WITH OPTIMISM:

TAPE: CUT FOUR -- SITHOLE

"THE WAR, I THINK, WILL END IN A MATTER OF SIX TO EIGHT WEEKS. WE HAVE HAD OUR PROBLEMS. THE PROBLEM HAS NOT BEEN ONE OF SELLING THE AGREEMENT TO THE GUERRILLAS, BUT ONE OF GETTING THEM TO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS NO THREAT TO GET THEM TOGETHER AND GET THEM EXTERMINATED PHYSICALLY."

NARR:

SPEAKING IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA, PATRIOTIC FRONT CO-LEADER JOSHUA NKOMO SAID HIS FORCES WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT UNTIL THERE IS A COMPLETE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN RHODESIA. AND A ZAPU SPOKESMAN INSIDE RHODESIA HAD THIS REACTION TO THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT'S OFFER OF AMNESTY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION:

TAPE: CUT FIVE -- ZAPU SPOKESMAN

"I DO NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A FEW CADRES, WHO ARE TIRED, DEFECTING. BUT YOU COULD NEVER CALL THAT A CEASEFIRE AT ALL. AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED IT IS A WASTE OF TIME."

NARR:

(OPT) IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA THIS WEEK, SOUTH AFRICA CARRIED OUT A MILITARY RAID AGAINST NAMIBIAN GUERRILLAS BASED IN ANGOLA. ACCORDING TO SOUTH AFRICAN OFFICIALS, IT WAS A LIMITED OPERATION AIMED AT GUERRILLAS OF THE SOUTHWEST AFRICAN PEOPLES' ORGANIZATION -- SWAPO. SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA SAID THE INCURSION WAS IN RETALIATION FOR SEVERAL RECENT SWAPO RAIDS INTO NAMIBIA. BUT THE ANGOLAN NEWS AGENCY SAID SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES ATTACKED A REFUGEE CAMP AND HEAVILY BOMBED A KEY MINING TOWN. IN WASHINGTON, THE STATE DEPARTMENT EXPRESSED GRAVE CONCERN OVER THE OPERATION AND CALLED FOR AN IMMEDIATE EXPLANATION. (END OPT)

VICE-PRESIDENT WALTER MONDALE BEGAN A FIVE-NATION TOUR OF THE FAR EAST THIS WEEK TO EXPRESS THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR U.S. ALLIES IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD. IN THE PHILIPPINES, MISTER MONDALE EMPHASIZED PRESIDENT CARTER'S DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE A STRONG U.S. ROLE IN THE PACIFIC. HE SAID HE AND PRESIDENT FERDINAND MARCOS RECOGNIZE THAT U.S. ACCESS TO BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES BENEFITS BOTH NATIONS AND CONTRIBUTES TO ALL OF ASIA. MISTER MONDALE ALSO RE-AFFIRMED THAT ON-GOING DISCUSSIONS ABOUT RETAINING THOSE FACILITIES ARE BASED ON PHILIPPINE SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE AIR AND NAVAL STATIONS. VICE-PRESIDENT MONDALE ALSO DISCUSSED ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES. HE SAID HE EXPLAINED TO PRESIDENT MARCOS HOW HUMAN RIGHTS INEVITABLY AFFECT THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP BECAUSE OF DEEP CONCERN AMONG AMERICANS.

LATER, MISTER MONDALE MET WITH SEVERAL OPPOSITION AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS. AND ONE OF THEM WAS LATER QUOTED AS SAYING HE WAS LED TO BELIEVE THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WILL DO ALL IT CAN TO HASTEN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DEMOCRACY IN THE PHILIPPINES.

PRESIDENT MARCOS LATER DENIED THAT THERE WERE ANY POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE PHILIPPINES. AND HE CONCLUDED THAT THE MONDALE VISIT DID NOT SETTLE ALL MAJOR ISSUES BUT DID LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR THEIR RESOLUTION. THE NEXT STOP IN THE VICE-PRESIDENT'S TRIP WAS THAILAND, AND VOA CORRESPONDENT ROBERT LODGE WHO IS TRAVELLING WITH MISTER MONDALE, HAD THIS REPORT:

TAPE: CUT SIX -- LODGE

"ON HIS ARRIVAL HERE FROM MANILA, VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE SAID HIS VISIT TO BANGKOK WILL PROVIDE CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF THE ENDURING AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO THAILAND. HE SAID THAILAND'S CONTINUED PROSPERITY AND INDEPENDENCE ARE OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE TO THE UNITED STATES. HE SAID THE UNITED STATES RETAINS VITAL SECURITY INTERESTS IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION AND HAS LARGE AND GROWING COMMERCIAL TIES, DESPITE THE CHANGES WHICH HAVE SWEPT THE REGION IN THE LAST DECADE."

NARR:

IN THE WAKE OF LAST WEEK'S BLOODY COUP IN AFGHANISTAN, A LONG-TIME COMMUNIST HAS BEEN APPOINTED TO HEAD THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL THAT SEIZED POWER LAST WEEK. THE NEW AFGHAN LEADER, NOOR MOHAMMED TARAKI, HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY SINCE ABOUT 1955 AND ITS SECRETARY-GENERAL SINCE LAST WEEK.

THE COUP IN AFGHANISTAN WAS APPARENTLY PRECIPITATED BY A GOVERNMENT CRACKDOWN ON COMMUNISTS FOLLOWING A COMMUNIST-LED DEMONSTRATION IN KABUL TEN DAYS EARLIER. OBSERVERS IN THE AREA CAUTION THAT IT MAY TOO EARLY TO PREDICT THE ORIENTATION OF THE NEW AFGHAN REGIME. THE NEW GOVERNMENT SAYS IT WILL FOLLOW A POLICY OF ACTIVE AND POSITIVE NON-ALIGNMENT. BUT AFGHANISTAN'S NEIGHBORS ARE WONDERING JUST WHAT THAT MEANS, (OPT) AS REPORTED BY VOA CORRESPONDENT FRED BROWN:

TAPE: CUT SEVEN -- BROWN

"IN PAKISTAN THERE WAS NO OFFICIAL COMMENT. BUT PAKISTANI NEWSPAPERS EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE SITUATION WILL QUICKLY RETURN TO NORMAL AND THAT AFGHANISTAN WILL MAINTAIN ITS GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY. BOTH IRAN AND CHINA ARE BELIEVED TO BE DEEPLY UPSET BY THE DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN. IRAN WHICH IS STAUNCHLY ANTI-COMMUNIST IS UNDERSTOOD TO HAVE WARNED PRESIDENT DAOUD ABOUT GOWING COMMUNIST ACTIVITY IN AFGHANISTAN. SINCE AFGHANISTAN'S COMMUNISTS HAVE BEEN HEAVILY ORIENTED TOWARD MOSCOW IN THE PAST, OBSERVERS SAY PEKING CAN HARDLY BE HAPPY AT THE PROSPECT OF A PRO-SOVIET REGIME IN KABUL. THE MILITARY OFFICERS WHO CARRIED OFF THE COUP HAD BEEN TRAINED IN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE SOVIET UNION WAS THE FIRST COUNTRY TO RECOGNIZE THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

NARR:

CELEBRATIONS, INCLUDING SPEECHES, DANCING AND SINGING, WERE HELD IN MANY PARTS OF THE UNITED STATES THIS WEEK TO HONOR ONE OF MANKIND'S EARLIEST RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS: THE SUN. BUT THE MESSAGE THAT WAS BEING ECHOED WAS MORE PRACTICAL THAN MYSTICAL SUPPORT FOR SOLAR ENERGY IN AN EFFORT TO SHOW CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THAT THE SUN'S POWER SHOULD BE A MAJOR SOURCE OF EVERYONE'S ENERGY NEEDS. AS ACTOR AND ENVIRONMENTALIST ROBERT REFFORD POINTED OUT, IT IS IRONIC THAT THE SOURCE OF LIFE ON OUR EARTH -- THE SUN -- SHOULD BE IGNORED FOR SO LONG AS AN ENERGY OPTION:

TAPE: CUT EIGHT -- REDFORD

"THE SUN WILL ALWAYS WORK. THE SUN WILL NEVER INCREASE ITS PRICE ON A HEATING BILL. IT WON'T POLLUTE OUR AIR OR FOUL OUR RIVERS. SOLAR ENERGY CAN'T BE EMBARGOED BY ANY FOREIGN NATION. IT ISN'T SUBJECT TO BLACKOUTS OR POWER FAILURES. IT WILL CREATE NEW JOBS IN DESIGN, ENGINEERING, LABOR AND MANUFACTURING."

ANNCR:

AND THOSE ARE SOME OF THE STORIES THAT MADE HEADLINES THIS WEEK. YOUR NARRATOR WAS ----------. JOIN US AGAIN NEXT -------- WHEN THE VOICE OF AMERICA TAKES A LOOK AT THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS OF THE WEEK.

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JS/RTD/PY